

# **EXHIBIT A**

Honorable Judge Young:

It's a weird thing to have to write a letter in defense of your own life. Particularly when one has abysmally low self-esteem.

I don't like myself. I have never liked myself. I especially dislike myself now.

I've tried to sit down and write this letter countless times now in the past three years. I can get as far as fifteen pages in and suddenly abandon the effort. There is so much to say and I can't find the words to say it. I could fill a thousand pages and never feel like I've done enough.

I am going to do my best to provide a background on some of the more chaotic and abusive things that occurred during my time as a contractor at eBay. I am going to try and write these memories as concisely as I can while still making some sense. This is not to serve as an excuse for my actions, but as an explanation.

I hope you'll forgive the casual tone I may take in my writing. It may come across as cold and matter-of-fact – this is a coping mechanism. I regret that I come across as cold, as I fear I did in my proffers with the AUSAs. Though it may come off as casual – please know there is absolutely nothing casual about this. I feel the gravity of this in everything I do. My body is physically weighed down with remorse, as are my emotions. I haven't genuinely smiled or laughed in years. I'm not sure I ever will again.

I'm not a cold person. I'm just trying to keep myself together and survive. Which was also my error in this series of events.

I'd also like to make it clear from the start here that I am sorry. I'm more sorry about my involvement in this than all of the other mistakes in my life combined.

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I've had mental health issues since childhood. I first showed signs of severe anxiety around age five. Major depressive disorder made its first appearance in my life at age 12. I spent nearly the entire summer between sixth and seventh grade locked in my house because I was afraid to go outside. I remember trying to go for a walk with my mom and only making it about 200 yards before I broke down sobbing and ran back home. I thought I was going to die.

The agoraphobia thankfully went away over time, but the anxiety and depression remained constant through high school, college, and now into adulthood. Most recently, I was diagnosed with ADHD in high school and autism in adulthood.

In the middle of the mental health issues, there was always a strong feeling of guilt. I had a decent life. I had family and friends who loved me. Why couldn't I just be happy?

College started to show me that I didn't need to be scared all the time. Thanks to support from my boyfriend, I was able to move across the country to attend school – something that was unprecedented even a year prior.

I still experienced some setbacks in college. At the beginning of my junior year, I had two concurrent concussions that resulted in a diagnosis of Post-Concussion Syndrome (PCS). Compounded by a traumatic brain injury I had in kindergarten and ADHD, the PCS led to months of chronic fatigue, poor executive function, and constant headaches.

I decided not to take time off from school to recuperate. By the time summer arrived, it was recommended I refrain from working and let my brain rest. This was a blow to my self-esteem. I felt lazier and more stupid than ever before. I was all too aware about the massive gap growing on my resume. By the time I graduated college, my most recent job experience was as a roller coaster operator at the local amusement park.

My anxiety increased as I began my job search post-college. Nowhere I applied showed an interest in me until I finally got an interview with Concentric Advisors in May 2017 – a full year after graduation.

I started work at eBay as a contractor with Concentric Advisors in late May 2017. My title was 'Intelligence Operator', and I earned \$25/hour. At the time, I worked in the Global Security Operations Center (GSOC).

The GSOC was a windowless room filled with fluorescent lights and dozens of screens. The GSOC itself was about 20' by 30'. One wall was made entirely of glass, with a glass door leading into the connected room; called 'The War Room,' another windowless box of roughly the same size.

Things in the GSOC were weird from the start. Within 6 weeks of my hire, nine of my colleagues were fired without cause. The people that trained me were suddenly gone, and I was forced to work overtime to fill the gap. With only a month of experience, I suddenly had to train new people on a job I knew little about, while fearing that I was next on the chopping block. There were so many times I wanted to quit. I dreaded going to the office most days, even in the beginning. I worried it was my anxiety telling me to jump ship again. At that point, I'd had anxiety as a constant presence in my life for nearly 20 years. The only way I knew how to deal with it was to push through it and pretend the anxiety wasn't happening.

So I pushed through. I did what I could to keep my head above water.

I ignored so many warning signs. Looking back, they seem so obvious. I've spent so many nights going through everything that happened in detail, and I struggle to treat my past self with kindness. I hate her for being so stupid. I hate her for being involved with eBay. I hate her for being involved in anything that hurt others. And I hate her for ruining her life.

But I'm also in a lot of therapy. And a big part of therapy for me is going through my traumas and examining the instances one by one. It's like taking a giant ball of tangled up strings and going through and pulling them out so they can be inspected as singular strands.

As I do this, I'm learning to see myself in each scenario as it popped up. It's painful to relive each memory as though I'm in it again – but it allows me to understand myself a little better. Examining myself this way allows me to see how I missed signs in the beginning. I can see why I failed to notice as things started to escalate. And I'm allowing myself to see why I thought I was out of options when I was asked to do things that I found morally reprehensible. I was threatened, I was scared, and I was doing what I thought was necessary to survive.

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The first warning signs that things were “off” at eBay were subtle. As I said previously, my only official job experience prior to being an analyst was at the local amusement park as a ride attendant. I truly had no idea what was normal or not in an office environment.

After the initial nine analysts were fired, I faced sexual harassment while working alone on the night shift. Some of the harassment came from the janitor, who escalated his actions to the point of trying to kiss me one night. When I raised a concern over this to Stephanie Popp, she laughed it off. It became a joke in the office with people laughing about the ‘janitor with a crush.’ I started to take the trash out myself to avoid having the janitor in the room with me.

Then a new analyst was hired to work on graveyard shift. During one of our nights working together, he told me about his sex life in extreme detail. I told my supervisor through Concentric Advisors about it, and they immediately reported it to Popp and Jim Baugh. Popp and Baugh reacted by chastising me for telling my supervisor instead of going straight to Popp, who was by then an eBay employee. I was told to never go to Concentric again about any issues I had. The other analyst was made aware that I had told others about his actions, but was otherwise not reprimanded. I was forced to continue working on the night shift with him.

I faced further sexual harassment and abuse over the years at eBay – some instances even from Baugh himself. Previous experience told me to keep it to myself, as no one would help me and it would only make my situation worse. This thought of having no one to help me stuck with me through all aspects of my job.

Over the next few months in 2017, the shift work was hell. The GSOC was rebranded as the Global Intelligence Center (GIC), and my title was changed to Intelligence Analyst. During this time, more of my colleagues were fired. I was forced to work the night shift alone for weeks at a time. This included on the night of the mass shooting at the Harvest Festival in Las Vegas. I had to call dozens of eBay workers in the area to assure they were safe, watch extremely graphic footage, and send out accurate updates to the highest levels of eBay. I was in charge of the welfare of others because almost all of the senior staff on the security team was out drinking and incapable of making the decisions needed. It was a baptism by fire.

During a low time in my life, I ended up receiving a lot of praise for the way I handled the shooting. Our team had also dispatched a rescue crew to the British Virgin Islands to save an eBay employee who was stranded there following Hurricane Maria. The crew rescued her, her brother, and an elderly couple they had befriended. I decided to continue my work at eBay as I felt that the good in helping desperate people outweighed the moments of darkness in the job.

The dark spots definitely still existed, though. We learned that an embarrassed Baugh was a dangerous man. We were frequently punished for making Baugh look “incompetent.” In October 2017, the GIC failed to report on the Northern California Wildfires before the CEO, Devin Wenig, asked Baugh about them. Baugh was unable to give Wenig updated information, for which Wenig chastised him. Baugh went into a rage against Popp and the GIC, unleashing an onslaught of insults about our intelligence and mental capacity.

Things slowly started to unravel more from late 2017 into 2018. When Baugh was having a bad day, he would come to the GIC to take it out on the analysts. He would quiz us on obscure world events to make sure we were staying up to date on everything happening in the world. Failing to know the answer would result in public humiliation. He would also pin analysts against one another, spreading gossip about analysts behind our backs.

Baugh incited fear frequently amongst the entire security team. He would hold active shooter drills at random, forcing analysts to run outside into the parking lot and practice running from the “shooter” in front of other eBay employees. One such instance forced analysts to take “cover” in someone’s car. Baugh would slam his hand down on the roof of the car while yelling, “Bang! You’re dead! You’re dead! Bang! You’re all dead!”

When we would discuss these drills after the fact, Baugh would explain to us that he was doing them for our (the analysts’) benefit, as we were at “constant risk” of a mass shooting. This was an ongoing theme during everything to occur in the GIC – constantly on guard, never knowing if today was the day someone was going to go crazy and try to kill us.

Baugh would further demonstrate what could happen if we ever let our guard down by showing us horrific videos. One that stands out is footage taken after a car crash. The camera pans over a car on fire, surrounded by severed limbs. A decapitated head sat next to the upside down car and one person was just a twitching torso. Baugh would show us these graphic videos – and if he noticed you looking away or flinching, he would decide you were “weak.” And being “weak” was reason for termination. One of Baugh’s favorite things to tell us was that if we were ever caught crying, we’d be fired on the spot.

Baugh also had the GIC subscribe to various newsletter sources about the Islamic State and similar terrorist organizations. Our inboxes were filled with terrorist propaganda – and we were forced to read every email. Baugh would know if we didn’t, as he’d quiz us on their content. These newsletters were often filled with violent content – I was often subjected to videos of beheadings and other gruesome killings that continue to stick with me.

Did I wonder why analysts for a tech company were subjected to such content? Yes. Questions about this were met with long lectures about how eBay could very well be the next target for a terrorist attack. We were told to scour these newsletters to try and deliberate if any terrorist organizations viewed the company as a threat. Every new terrorist attack or mass shooting in a location where eBay had a footprint sent the GIC into chaos, all while Baugh told the analysts we needed to anticipate something like this happening to us. We were on edge constantly.

If Baugh felt the analysts were getting too comfortable or starting to question him, he'd increase the intensity of things in the GIC. When he learned the analysts weren't locking our personal lockers (we were never told to do so previously), he ordered an armed off-duty police officer to march into the GIC and remove all of the analysts' personal belongings and throw them in trash bags. I vividly remember the shock and humiliation we all felt. I remember one analyst was barred from working that day – his laptop was in his locker, and therefore relocated to a trash bag. Baugh said he could spend his eight hours cleaning instead. In an attempt towards being helpful, I told the analyst, Max, that he could use my desktop while I worked from my own laptop.

When Baugh learned of this suggestion, it was the first time I witnessed how angry he could become.

The analysts were gathered in the War Room and yelled at for nearly an hour. We were told that our job was basically “Disneyland” compared to all other security jobs out there. Baugh informed me that I was nowhere near as smart as him and warned against me ever “defying” or “undermining” him again – his interpretation of me offering Max my computer.

This is the first instance that I can clearly recall of Baugh using classic abusive techniques. He spent the better half of an hour telling the analysts how stupid we all were and threatening our future in the security industry. Then he started building back up to compliments. He started telling us that he was only so hard on us because he knew we could be great if only we tried harder. He would say that we were all there for a reason – we had all survived so many rounds of firings because he knew that we were cut out for the job. That being said, some analysts were fired just a few weeks later.

In May 2018, eBay had a round of mass layoffs and three of the analysts were let go – Romteen, Max, and Morgan. The analysts that remained in the GIC following the layoffs were all women that were 24 years of age or younger.

Baugh noted that while he legally had to refer to them as layoffs, he considered the employees to be ‘fired.’ Romteen was apparently fired for “his attitude,” Max was fired for “trying to stir sh\*t up” and Morgan was fired for finding another job behind Baugh’s back.

Bizarrely, Baugh also took this opportunity to spend an hour convincing the remaining analysts that Romteen was an Iranian spy and that he had been hired as a favor to Baugh’s wife, who was in the CIA. Baugh’s wife supposedly needed him to keep an eye on Romteen as he was investigated for terrorist activities. Baugh spent an inordinate amount of time convincing the analysts that we had unknowingly worked with a terrorist and that we would consequently all be investigated for our ties to him.

Once Baugh revealed that he was messing with us, he mocked us for being stupid enough to believe him. Then he turned around and told us that we were correct in being suspicious of others. He told us that moving forward, we needed to be suspicious of everyone and that he was the only one we could ever really trust.



Looking back, this is when the environment in the GIC started to turn more toxic and abusive.

Baugh liked to find the weak points of everyone working under him and delighted in pushing them until they broke. We first noticed this was happening to our manager, Lauryn. She was hired alongside Stephanie Stockwell in February 2018 and remained largely off of Baugh's radar until the layoffs occurred three months later.

Popp was on vacation during the layoffs, so Lauryn had to take her place in attending to Baugh's whims. Months after the fact, Baugh claimed that he watched something snap inside Lauryn during the week of the layoffs. He admitted that he noticed how anxious she got and enjoyed making her upset. He told us that he would purposefully stress her out to entertain himself. Baugh would make up elaborate stories about ways he wanted to prank Popp, and would force Lauryn to participate in the prank against her will. Oftentimes, Popp was "in" on the prank and would react in extreme manners to make it worse for Lauryn. She was caught crying several times by analysts and other employees.

Lauryn was also harsh towards the analysts. She would twist our words to get us in trouble with Baugh and Popp. She kept a detailed notebook about our mistakes and would use them against us when convenient to her. When she'd leave for Washington to visit her husband, she made me watch her cat. She didn't pay me for this service – she expected it as part of my job. I think because of the way Lauryn acted towards the analysts, we failed to notice the pressure Baugh put on her until she was gone.

Sometime in the summer of 2018, Baugh decided Lauryn should not be the only salaried employee in the GIC and all analysts were switched to salaried positions. We were initially excited about the bump in pay and the prospect of more regular working hours. We were all given work phones and quickly added to a group chat with Baugh and Popp.

It wasn't long before our lives were entirely consumed by our work. Baugh began keeping us in the office for 10-12 hours a day. We were expected to rotate being "on call" where we would have the office phones forwarded to our cell phones after hours, including weekends. We were not allowed to be away from our laptops or out of cell service when we were on call. We would be punished if we did not respond to messages within ten minutes of receipt. Even if an analyst wasn't on call, we were expected to respond to texts from Baugh immediately, no matter the time of day. If we didn't entertain his whims, he would berate us for being "bad employees" and remind us that we were privileged for having our jobs.

Baugh started spending more time with the analysts altogether during this. We had a "team bonding" trip in San Francisco where we boated around the bay and drank wine. He started spending his days in the War Room. Nearly every evening, he would tap on the glass partition and beckon for us to join him at the conference table. These talks would interrupt us as we were finishing up work and could occasionally drag on for hours. These meetings rarely had any point aside from listening to Baugh talk about himself and try to gather personal information about the analysts.

During one of these meetings, Baugh had our intern, Meli, convince the analysts to take various personality tests. Meli was like a niece to Baugh – she grew up next door to him and her mother was the nanny for his children. She was living with Baugh while she interned, and told him about these personality tests that she did in psychology classes in college. Every analyst partook in the personality tests. Baugh had us send the results directly to Popp so she would have a record of our answers. They essentially received detailed reports on how to torture each analyst. I remember being mocked for having ‘empathy’ as my number one trait. In contrast, Baugh and Lauryn had empathy as their lowest traits.

I believe Baugh used the personality test results against the analysts. He learned the best way to appeal to us in order to get us to do things. He knew getting me to empathize with his cause was the key to coercing me. In another test, I was labeled as an ‘Enthusiast,’ ‘Helper’ and ‘Loyalist.’ Essentially, these results showed that I wanted to help others and was loyal to those I trusted. Baugh played on these traits consistently during the rest of my time at eBay.

Things in the GIC got even worse when Lauryn was fired alongside my friend and fellow analyst, Madeline. After a particularly hard weekend of being on call, Madeline came into work on Monday exhausted and angry about her weekend. She was visibly upset during a presentation we were giving to the entire Global Security team. After the presentation, Baugh and Popp pulled Lauryn and myself into a separate conference room. Baugh said, “If she’s going to be such a b\*tch about all of this, she cannot be here. She cannot be ungrateful like that. She is pouting in front of everyone like a child. Get her out of my face. Tell her she needs to meet with Popp and I in an hour. If she doesn’t completely change her attitude by then, she’s fired.”

I was not Madeline’s supervisor; I have no idea why I was involved in this conversation. Since I was, I took a moment in private to warn her that Baugh was furious and she was apparently in danger of being reprimanded. Madeline understandably became more upset, and thanked me for letting her know. Shortly after, Baugh kicked all of the analysts out except for Madeline and our fellow analyst/her best friend, Anneli.

After some time in the War Room with them, Anneli joined the rest of us outside. She said that Madeline was clearly upset and was trying to explain that she was burning out. When Baugh and Popp repeatedly told her to calm down, Madeline asked for them to please refer her to her HR representative.

This had been a common point of confusion for the analysts – since we were contractors, our HR was technically supposed to be through Concentric Advisors. But we were never really given a name of a specific HR person. Baugh and Popp always told us to come to them about any personnel issues. Once Madeline asked for the name of an HR representative specifically, Anneli was asked to leave the room. We found out later that Baugh and Popp never referred Maddy to anyone. She was told to leave and was suspended for the rest of the week.

At the end of the week, Madeline was fired, alongside Lauryn. Baugh gleefully announced to the remaining four analysts that he had Lauryn go to the Concentric office in San Francisco under the guise of dropping off Madeline’s personal effects. While there, she was brought into a conference room and fired.



Concentric Advisors was understandably upset by the cruelty of these actions. I'm sure Madeline and Lauryn also let them know about certain aspects of what was going on behind the scenes at eBay. The CEO of Concentric came to eBay and got into a heated argument with Popp, telling her that Concentric was not a "temp agency" and that they could not keep up with the revolving door of employees. When Baugh found out about Concentric's complaint, he terminated ties with Concentric on the spot. We were to have a new contracting agency by the end of the year.

At the end of 2018, Anneli gave notice that she found another job. Baugh was blindsided. Anneli got the job through a friend from her old sorority – it was in a completely different field that Baugh did not have any connections in. He was furious. Annie offered to continue working for a few more weeks as they found someone to fill her role, but Baugh terminated her position immediately.

At this point in time, we were already understaffed. We lost an analyst and a manager in October. Now we were losing another analyst. Six roles suddenly had to be filled by only three analysts.

By January 2019, the remaining analysts (Michelle, Stephanie Stockwell, and me) were onboarded by Progressive F.O.R.C.E. Concepts (PFC). PFC did not have a background in intelligence analysis. Up until this point, they were strictly doing physical security. Employees consisted almost entirely of former law enforcement and veterans. Baugh told us they were perfect for being our contracting agency because it was run by a friend of his who would be "very hands off" and let Baugh "do whatever he wanted." Baugh said he hired them as "puppets" – they had no idea how to manage an intel unit, they would just pay our bills.

Whenever our supervisors at PFC did show up to the eBay office, it was always with Popp in the room. We were never given a chance to speak with them privately, even though it was clear we were run ragged and needed help. Any complaint we brought up to them was immediately reported back to Popp and Baugh. There was no way to comfortably ask for help.

We were worked to the bone. We were in the office by 8:00 in the morning, and regularly stayed until 10:00 at night. We were frequently woken up by random emails and texts from Baugh, with the occasional emergency call in the middle of the night. I was awoken with such frequency by 'urgent' texts with a certain text tone that hearing that "ping" today still sends me into a state of panic.

Approximately the last four hours of my time in the office every day was taken up by what we called "Baugh Time" which was literally just Baugh talking to the analysts about whatever he wanted. We were not allowed to use our laptops during this time. Looking at our phones was considered rude – we had to leave them in our pockets. If we answered a work call or text while Baugh was talking, we were yelled at in front of our peers.

This block of "Baugh Time" made it so we would fall behind on our projects. This often meant that I would be awake until around 1 or 2 in the morning, scrambling to finish my tasks for the day. Once I fell asleep, I was under constant threat of receiving a call or text I needed to act on. I

never fell into a deep sleep, I was always ready to act if I needed to. After about 4 hours of low quality sleep, I'd wake up to get a head start on my emails and get ready to leave for work.

I averaged 4-5 hours of sleep a night for my final eight months at eBay.

I was under so much debilitating stress that I didn't know how to channel. I didn't understand that the things happening at my job were abnormal. I didn't know how to handle what was happening. I started to consider leaving again, but still feared what Baugh would do to me if he learned I was looking elsewhere.

Almost like he could detect my restlessness, Baugh announced that Michelle and I would accompany him on an Executive Protection trip to Europe in spring 2019. This is how life went – when I wanted to leave, a new opportunity would present itself, convincing me to stay at eBay just a “little bit longer.” This was a common coping mechanism for me in my final months there.

The trip to Europe was awful. I did not get an opportunity to acclimate to the time change. I had to do my daily tasks on Pacific Time while also handling a flurry of tasks in Berlin as well. After work hours, Michelle and I were invited to eat dinner and drink with Baugh. Invitations from Baugh were always mandatory. Anyone who turned them down would be ridiculed behind their back and were usually terminated within the month.

Baugh forced copious amounts of alcohol on us, ordering refills before we finished our first. We would get shamed for wasting money if we did not finish our drinks. In one particularly upsetting evening, Baugh forced Michelle and I to list things that were “wrong” with our coworker Tiffany. Baugh became increasingly irate when we insisted we liked her. He made us start to nitpick small actions of hers – things that didn't really bother us, but that may bother others. Baugh took these critiques and blew them wildly out of proportion. The next day, he informed us that he would be using our reasoning to fire Tiffany in the coming weeks.

During this dinner, Baugh also spent the better part of an hour trying to convince Michelle that her fiancé was having an affair with her best friend. When I repeatedly defended Michelle and her fiancé, Baugh told me I was an idiot. Baugh's commentary about Michelle's fiancé lasted up to her wedding two months later. He brought it up with some frequency amongst mixed company in the office, and passed a photo of Michelle's best friend around the office to prove that she was a home wrecker.

A side note – it was common for Baugh to embarrass us publicly. Baugh had a video of me falling off a stool in the office saved on his phone. He showed the video to everyone – all of my coworkers had seen it. Baugh would show it whenever he wanted to belittle me. He showed the CEO of eBay. He even showed our waiters at restaurants.

By spring 2019, Baugh had been telling me for months that I was going to be promoted. I had been waiting for that to happen before I started applying for new jobs. I wanted a more senior role so I could find a comparable job elsewhere. I was starting to plan my escape. I confided in my mom that I was going to quit. Unaware of the extreme situation I was in, she advised that I stay in my job until I had a new one lined up. I agreed this was the logical thing to do.

Regrettably, my autistic brain gets stuck in patterns – it only saw two facts at this point.

1. I could not leave eBay without another job lined up.

2. I could not apply to other jobs because Baugh would find out and ruin my life over it.

I can't explain why my brain operates like that. I had learned to exist at eBay with learned helplessness. Per Medical News Today, "learned helplessness is **a state that occurs after a person has experienced a stressful situation repeatedly**. They come to believe that they are unable to control or change the situation, so they do not try — even when opportunities for change become available" (Leonard 2022).

Baugh had a falling out with Popp in May 2019 and promoted Stockwell to an eBay employee from her contract position with no interviews or explanation. He had a private meeting with me and told me that I could say any concerns I had without fear of being punished. I told him that I was hurt that I had been lied to about a promotion and shared that Michelle and I were having problems with Stockwell taking credit for our projects. I also shared with Baugh that there was an ongoing issue with Stockwell implying that I was stupid in front of our peers. Baugh listened to my words and acted appreciative that I shared my thoughts with him. He assured me that I was still a valued member of the team and that big things were coming for me.

The next day, Baugh scheduled a meeting with me. When I entered the room, he looked like he was ready to kill me. He used everything I had said in our previous meeting against me and threatened to fire me for being disloyal to Stockwell and for talking behind her back. He berated me for being stupid and r\*tarded until I started to cry. He told me I would be fired and kicked out of the intelligence community until I apologized to Stockwell.

He sent Stockwell up to the room so I could apologize to her. And I earnestly did. I felt terrible that Baugh had told Stockwell that I spoke behind her back. I was not trying to jeopardize her job; I was just trying to explain some concerns I had and my frustration over the situation.

Baugh later called this the day he "broke" me. It was May 21, 2019. He brought it up again in early August, when he was telling me about how he had to "break" Dave Harville to get him to do what he wanted.

Harville is one of the rudest, most corrupt, and misogynistic people I have ever met. He was in trouble with HR numerous times for saying horribly graphic things. He called the analysts "Girl Scouts" and constantly insulted us over our age and gender. We asked Baugh to keep him away from us.

Baugh responded by publicly humiliating Harville in numerous ways, including by pairing him up with me for a mentorship program. I was forced to spend time with Harville under the guise of helping one another grow. I had complained about this man and as a result, was forced to spend more time one-on-one with him.

After a few weeks with Harville as my mentor, Baugh decided to kick him out of the mentorship program and made himself my mentor. It was during one of these meetings that he explained the

concept of “breaking” someone so you could build them back up into what you needed. And he explained he had done that with me.

To be honest, I’m not sure when I broke at this job. I think it was a slow rupture over time that went unnoticed. Like the lobster in a pot analogy – I was set in a pot of cool water that started to heat up slowly and I didn’t notice I was boiling until it was too late.

The “water” started to really heat up in the weeks following the meeting where Baugh “broke” me. I spoke with Michelle, who had a similar meeting with Baugh. She said she was just going to keep her head down moving forward and try to stay afloat. She described herself as having two personalities – “Work Michelle” and “Home Michelle.” We agreed to stick things out while we prepared for some trainings in the coming months – an attempt to beef up our resumes before breaking free from Baugh.

One such training was a course on Internet investigations. It was entitled “Internet Intelligence Training: Social Media Exploitation,” hosted by the Hetherington Group and the National White Collar Crime Center (NWC3). It was attended by public and private sector analysts a like. Another training Michelle and I attended was the “Reid Technique of Interviewing and Interrogation.” Going to such trainings further convinced us that what we were doing was normal.

The Reid training took place in Austin in June 2019. I was back and forth between San Jose and Austin most of that month. I was on to my third sinus infection in six months and averaging three hours of sleep a night as I struggled to keep up. It was during this time that Baugh and Stockwell approached me about a project they were working on regarding the Steiners. At the outset, it seemed like a typical look into the background of one of our Persons of Interest.

At this point, I was aware of the Steiners. We had Google Alerts set up so we would receive an email whenever a news article about eBay was written. Since the Steiners wrote frequently about eBay, their blog content would pop up in our inbox a few times every week.

The Steiners were also mentioned a few times by Baugh in the weeks leading up to this request – I was aware that the Chief Executive Officer of eBay and the Chief Communications Officer, were frequently complaining about the Steiners’ blog. Baugh also let the GIC know that eBay had previously tried communicating with the Steiners to try and influence their content to be more positive towards eBay.

This is all to say that it wasn’t that weird when Baugh suggested we needed to start monitoring the Steiners’ online activity more closely. Baugh explained to me that he had reason to believe that the Steiners were receiving money from activist investors that were interested in joining eBay’s board of directors.

Baugh explained to us that these activist investors, Elliott Management, intended to use their stake in the company to put pressure on the C-Suite to fire the current CEO and massively downsize the company. Baugh told us it was our job to prevent this from happening because it was our job to protect CEO and all other eBay employees. Throughout Baugh’s rants against

Elliott Management and the Steiners, he would emphasize to us that mass layoffs would result in an increase of suicidal eBay employees. This was mentioned because during the last layoffs, a video of an employee jumping in front of a train was circulated around the security team. No one wanted to see anything like that again.

Baugh also explained to us that Elliott Management was a ruthless company. He claimed they had a reputation for destroying the lives of those that resisted them. He said that if they learned the name of any individual analysts researching them, they would uncover any information about us as possible and use it to come after our loved ones.

Baugh said we needed new laptops in order to research Elliott Management. He explained that since our eBay laptops had our identifying information on them, it wasn't safe to use them when we looked into the investors or the Steiners. According to Baugh, Elliott Management would be able to track our activity and connect it to us.

So Stockwell took me to Best Buy in Austin to purchase a cheap laptop – the “blue laptop.” Via phone call, Baugh instructed me to never connect the laptop to my home or work Wi-Fi, as Elliott could track those. Baugh had me download Virtual Private Network (VPN) apps on my cell phone and the laptop and told me to only use these to access the Internet.

Baugh also explained that since Elliott Management was likely funding the Steiners' blog, they were probably tracking web traffic pertaining to the Steiners' newsletter, Ecommercebytes, as well. He said all research into the blog needed to therefore take place through VPNs and the blue laptop. He again emphasized that these bizarre layers of obfuscation were necessary to protect me from Elliott Management.

From then on, Baugh had Stockwell and I trading off the monitoring of the blog. We had to send real-time messages on WhatsApp whenever the Steiners posted something relevant about eBay. If Baugh saw the article before we sent it, we were in big trouble. We had to send screenshots of their website every few hours and make in depth summaries of all articles. Baugh said that he needed this done in order to monitor or any activity that might show that they were in contact with Elliott Management. When we asked if there was something specific for us to watch out for, Baugh said only he could know. So we kept trading off these shifts. We were scouring the news and writing detailed reports constantly – on top of our regular work and the hiring and training of new operators for the GSOC in Austin.

I didn't have time to think about how bizarre this was or to research if this was a common occurrence in tech companies. Even if I did have time, Baugh had isolated the analysts so effectively from all other intelligence teams that I wouldn't even have known who to speak with.

Soon after we got home from Austin, Baugh had Michelle and our new analyst, Eleanor, join the monitoring efforts. A former analyst for the Santa Clara Police Department, Meagan, also worked in the GIC as well. When she didn't seem to think anything was off with the monitoring project, I figured it was typical of security teams to take these precautions.



Meagan also didn't bat an eye when Baugh started having other analysts harass the Twitter account "FidoMaster" from various fake accounts. Around this time, the account changed its name from FidoMaster to UnsuckEBay. Baugh was convinced that Mr. Steiner was behind this Twitter account and was obsessed with getting it to stop tweeting negative content about eBay. Many executives at eBay closely followed the account (not publicly) and would text Baugh every time it tweeted anything negative. Baugh told us they were pressuring him to shut it down.

I wasn't involved in the tweets at FidoMaster. I was already starting to grow uncomfortable with the way things were moving, particularly when Michelle created an account meant to look like it was run by a terrorist and tweeting vaguely threatening things in Arabic at them. I was the analyst in charge of intel gathering for the eBay Open event in Las Vegas. I busied myself with that as Michelle and Eleanor posed as a disgruntled former eBay employee in an attempt to get FidoMaster to give us his phone number or reveal his identity.

During one of my first days in Vegas for eBay Open, I was woken up early in the morning by frantic calls from the GIC informing me that FidoMaster had tweeted a photo from an airport – they were convinced that FidoMaster was on the way to eBay Open. They had determined that FidoMaster had tweeted from the Atlanta airport (if I recall correctly) and identified a flight from that location to Las Vegas. Baugh thought FidoMaster or the Steiners were on that flight. He ordered Brian Gilbert and myself to get to the airport and watch people exiting the plane.

Michelle bought us the cheapest tickets she could find to a random destination so we could get through security. Once we did, Baugh had us take video of people leaving the plane. I was deeply uncomfortable but afraid of what Baugh and Gilbert would do if I refused. We sent the video to the analysts in San Jose and no one was ever able to identify a person of interest (POI) in the video. Baugh did manage to blame me for my failure to identify FidoMaster in the crowd. The rest of my time in Vegas was deeply uncomfortable. My significantly older coworkers started to act more open around me. They would drink and make inappropriate jokes. It all culminated in them deciding to go to a strip club on our final evening. I saw many of my married coworkers do things that were not at all appropriate for a work trip. Baugh said I needed to stay because they were using my PFC credit card. He recognized I was uncomfortable though and worked to keep people working at the club away from me. He explained to me how typical this was in the security industry and that I needed to get used to it. I don't remember much from that night aside from wanting to leave. Baugh kept making me take shots and just kept reminding me that this was a lesson in not being able to trust anyone except him.

I flew home from Vegas the next day. I was eager to leave everything behind. Baugh decided to stay an additional night – I learned of this when he called me while belligerently drunk that evening. He had been locked out of his room because he did not notify the hotel of his intent to stay another night. He called me r\*tarded, told me I was worthless and too stupid to work for him, and many other insults about my intelligence. The other analysts watched as I broke down crying. I spent the whole weekend worried about my job.

When I mentioned this incident the next week, Baugh told me he forgave me. He turned the whole thing around on me and said I was being too sensitive. He made me feel like I was crazy



for my reaction. He successfully gas lit me into thinking that I was overly sensitive and that I needed to get a thicker skin to keep working in the industry.

The next few weeks were constantly filled with Baugh taking the analysts out for drinks and acting inappropriately. There was one evening where he tried to convince the newest analyst, Eleanor, that her boyfriend was abusive. Eleanor had only been at eBay for six weeks at this point, but Baugh was already consistently and effectively manipulating her.

That same night, I tripped as we were trying to leave (this is common for me – I have a birth defect that impacts my physical stability). I badly scraped my hand. Baugh convinced me to go to Popp's apartment with him – she lived just up the street from where we were.

I went with him and he cleaned up my hand. He gave me a drink and put on a movie as Popp went to sleep in the other room. I just remember getting really tired and struggling to keep my head up. The last thing I really remember is him telling me that the movie we were watching was his plan for his next step with the Steiners – I didn't remember this until long after that night. I just remembered that Leonardo DiCaprio was in it and that his character had brown eyes – meaning he had colored contacts for the role. When I Googled it later, I saw that the movie was "Body of Lies." In it, DiCaprio's character is a CIA agent that creates a fake terrorist organization to force another terrorist out of hiding.

Again – I don't remember much else from that night. I know I tried to call an uber and leave, but was prohibited from doing so. I know that I woke up on top of Popp's bed. Not a normal place for me to seek out, as I don't like physical contact with others. I got up to leave and saw a shirtless Baugh covered by a blanket on the couch. The things I don't know from that night continue to haunt me.

The next week at work, Baugh announced that the executives were growing more irate with the FidoMaster and the Steiners. He said we needed to figure something out before the CEO and Wendy Jones arrived back from their sabbaticals in late August.

Baugh explained that he wanted to spam the Steiners like they were spamming eBay. He instructed the analysts to start signing up their emails for random email lists. He said he wanted to overwhelm the Steiners website so they couldn't post any more. When that didn't work, he said he wanted to spam their home as well. He showed us a clip from the movie "Johnny Be Good" that showed random nuisances showing up to someone's home. He said the first phase of his plan involved getting prepaid Visa gift cards.

Already deeply uncomfortable with this plan, I volunteered to go get the gift cards with the intern Meli. I didn't want to be involved in the planning of this – I wanted to get out of that office. This was the only way I knew how. Baugh told us what we were doing was not illegal – but he wanted us to wear hats in the store. He used his background in the CIA to persuade us, explaining that things like this were commonplace in government operations. He said wearing the hat would be good practice for future occasions should we choose that career path.

I remember wearing the hat at one or two stores, but taking it off after a while because I thought it looked needlessly conspicuous and still believed it was for practice purposes at the time.

When we arrived back at the GIC, we learned that the analysts had compiled a long list of items to potentially send the Steiners. Baugh had Stockwell go over the list of ideas once we were all in the room. I was horrified by its contents.

The list contained things beyond anything I would have expected. A casket, funeral wreath, sex workers, explicit magazines...Baugh cackled as they reviewed the list. I told Baugh things were too far – that the casket and funeral wreath in particular were so extreme that I worried they would cause heart attacks. Meagan agreed. Baugh chastised us – he said the Steiners were devious people that would not be at all shocked by these “gifts.” He re-emphasized that they were responsible for doxxing eBay users (publishing private information), that they were inciting death threats towards the CEO, and that they refused to talk to eBay in a civil manner.

I didn’t know what to do. Baugh continued the meeting by looking up sex workers on a website he learned about from the police officers on our team. Analysts laughed as he searched for bizarre kinks. Meli suggested that the porn magazines on the list be sent to the Steiners’ neighbors instead of their own home. Baugh loved it. He said the magazines should be “barely legal” type content. He said those should be the first things ordered – Eleanor got right on it.

I remember as the meeting broke up, I tried to talk to Michelle and gauge how she felt about all of this. The only thing she was upset about was Stockwell taking credit for her idea of sending a book on grieving the loss of one’s spouse.

When people typically talk about stress responses, they refer to “fight or flight.” There are actually four identified responses– fight, flight, freeze, or fawn. Freezing causes one to feel stuck in place, when your body doesn’t think you can fight or flight. To fawn is a body’s emotional reaction that involves becoming highly agreeable towards the abusive person.

I did a mix of freeze and fawn. I didn’t feel like I could fight – it was becoming clear how unstable Baugh was. I had seen this man stab a giant hole in a chair during a meeting. I’d seen him throw things at people. He had been sexually abusive towards me and was known to carry a gun. Similarly, I couldn’t “fly” – Baugh made it clear he knew where I lived and knew where my parents lived. I was starting to realize that his “exaggerated” stories about harassing people in his past might not be as overstated as I previously thought. I knew too much. If he was willing to do this to people he’d never met before – what would he do to me?

There was no one I could turn to. I did not have an HR representative. Worse – my supervisors at PFC were on Baugh’s side. Their response to seeing a strip club on my credit card report was to laugh and tell me about the last time they’d been there. No concerns about a hostile work environment whatsoever. I was worried anything I told them would go right back to Baugh.

Baugh had also made this clear that several people in the C-Suite were aware of this, including Marie Huber, the head of legal. Worst – I didn’t think there were any law enforcement I could trust anymore. I clearly worked with ones that believed they were above the law – Brian Gilbert

and Phillip Cooke spoke frequently about their questionable actions when working in narcotics. And Gilbert had a lot of connections to all local police departments. I was sure if one of them heard about an eBay employee concerned about activity happening in the security team, they would immediately ask Gilbert about it – again leading straight back to Baugh.

I decided to try and minimize what the GIC did. I managed to talk Baugh out of sending a coffin. I appealed to him with logic rather than emotion – I knew it's what he responded to best. I managed to convince him they were too expensive. I also tried to stop the funeral wreath from going – showing only expensive options as well. Unfortunately someone found cheaper options and sent one along.

I avoided all efforts of harassment as best I could in the coming days. On August 7-8, the other analysts were busy with the "campaign" while I busied myself with other tasks. I remember frustrating Stockwell a lot during this time because I was helping Dan Cory and Cooke with their travel to Asia as a way to get away from what the analysts were doing.

I busied myself with gathering information on the Hong Kong protests on August 12-13. The airport was shut down due to police brutality protests and we had travelers in the country that we needed to monitor.

Unfortunately I do think I ordered roaches to be sent to the Steiners sometime that week. Baugh physically stood over me to ensure that I did it. I don't remember if I'm actually the one that sent them or if someone else ended up doing it. But I do remember Baugh having me look at the website.

From there, Baugh asked that I physically go to Boston with him. He explained that I needed to go as they needed to keep the hotel and other charges off of eBay company credit cards. He explained that they needed to use a PFC card and that it had to be me going since I was 25 and therefore old enough to rent a car. Stockwell could not go because she needed to stay back as manager.

Baugh made me aware that Harville had his team purchase a GPS tracker to put on the Steiners' vehicle. I immediately questioned if this was legal and Baugh explained that it was. He explained that the intent behind the tracker was to see if the Steiners were travelling anywhere to meet up with members of Elliott Management. He said we also needed to drive past their home to see if there were any obvious displays of wealth such as a new car or renovations. He had me book tickets and rent a car that evening.

He told me to sign up for a nearby cyber security convention as a cover for eBay. He said that he didn't need middle management asking about a trip to Boston at that time and needed a simple way to explain it. He even said if we got off the waitlist, we would actually go once we were done in Natick.

He also told me that he or Harville might need to leave a message for the Steiners with a sharpie. He asked that I purchase some. I did as he asked, but I purposely purchased the wrong kind. In the end, I was able to leave them in my suitcase without Baugh asking about them.

From there, I traveled to Boston with Baugh. We were to meet Harville when we landed. Baugh slept most of the flight. When he woke up during the last hour, he decided to divulge more details of his plan.

He started to explain that Gilbert's recent trips to Southern California to speak with Samoan gang members were related to what we were doing. He said he had a backup plan to send "thugs" in if needed. He explained this would be a last resort use of the tracking device. Seeing that this alarmed me, he started to assure me there were other backup plans in place first. For example, he had Gilbert and another retired police officer, Scott, was ready to go to Boston in the coming days to speak with the Steiners. He laughed at how clueless Scott was about the whole thing.

I started to panic more here. I was starting to see how intent Baugh was on doing whatever he deemed necessary. We got off the plane and found Harville. We picked up our car, headed to the hotel, and checked in. Then Baugh told us to meet downstairs at a certain time. I had a panic attack in my room. I remember Baugh contacting the GIC via our WhatsApp chat and saying he wanted a POI list for some reason. I remember Stockwell asking me to forward my POI sheet from eBay Open to her and rebuking me for not helping more. I was in an intense fog – this began a week of constantly feeling like I was in a bad dream.

I threw up and went downstairs to meet Baugh and Harville. On the drive to Natick, I prayed that the Steiners were out of town while the two men sat in the back and joked around.

I remember driving past their house and being relieved that the car wasn't in the driveway. Then I was filled with dread as Baugh said he and Harville would have to get out and look in the unattached garage. Baugh had me get on a phone call with them and Popp. Popp was to listen to a police scanner. I muted myself on the call so the others wouldn't hear me having a panic attack as I came to the realization that they were all out of their minds. I worried that I was too.

I was filled with relief when Baugh and Harville gave up on testing the doors and windows to the garage. Then terror as Harville mentioned getting tools to break in to the garage. It was an idea they had mentioned in passing previously, but I never thought they would actually seriously consider it.

We went back to the hotel and ordered some food to Baugh's room. Harville soon left to go call his wife. Baugh explained to me that Harville was scared of his wife because her family was involved with a large gang. Supposedly Harville had cheated on her in the past and she said if it happened again, he'd go "missing." I didn't know what to do with this information, but it didn't make me any more comfortable being stuck in a hotel room alone with Baugh. The place he was sitting effectively blocked my access to the door. Even though we were in separate chairs with a table between us, I was uncomfortable.

Baugh and Harville had both made comments about pretending to be involved in an affair with me if the police were to walk up to us in Natick and ask what we were doing. Baugh claimed it was the perfect cover for odd activity. I was growing increasingly uncomfortable with how casually he talked about me having to kiss him or Harville. I did not want to be alone with either of them, but kept getting put in one-on-one situations.

Baugh finally let me head back to my own room and said we'd regroup the next day.

The next day, Baugh stayed in his room most of the day. Harville used me to pay for lunch and then said he was headed to a hardware store. I declined to join him and went to my room. Baugh then had me drive him to Natick to purchase athletic clothes to walk around the neighborhood in. On the drive there, he explained to me that his father was having legal issues with his farm in Arkansas. He said Stockwell and Meli were helping him launch a similar "campaign" against the local prosecutor there. I declined his request to help – I figured I could at least avoid getting involved in that since it wasn't strictly work related.

In Natick, we parked and walked around. I avoided the Steiners' street as best I could, but Baugh was tracking my location via my cell phone and would make me walk by on occasion. When I did, I stayed fully across the street without stopping to look at the house.

At some point Harville joined us in Natick and got in the van with us. Baugh parked down the street from their home. I sat in the backseat with Harville and tried not to show that I was panicked. Baugh started to yell excitedly as Mr. Steiner apparently got in his car. Baugh started up the van. I thought we were leaving back to Boston, but was horrified to see that Baugh was following the Steiner's car. I remember screaming and begging that Baugh stop as he haphazardly drove through the neighborhood. I didn't understand at all what his goal was with this. Harville joined in asking Baugh to stop. Baugh finally did.

Baugh made fun of me as he dropped Harville and me off at Harville's rental car. He said he could hear the panic in my voice. Harville and I were pretty quiet on the ride back to the hotel. Baugh dropped off the rental van and instructed us to meet him for dinner.

At dinner, I was shocked to hear that Baugh wanted to start leaving things at the Steiners' doorstep. He and Harville made jokes as I tried to stay calm. Baugh told the GIC group chat to call 9-1-1 to the Steiner household. Nobody did so.

The next day was uneventful except Harville went home and Popp took his place in Boston. I was supposed to go home the next morning, but Baugh had me cancel that plan.

The next morning, Baugh told me to book a new car so we could drive to Natick again. He had me drive alone to Natick in Harville's car. He and Popp traveled together in the new rental car.

I had no idea what Baugh and Popp were doing around Natick, but he told me to park in the lot downtown and walk around. I walked around downtown alone, while on the phone with Baugh and Popp. I remember walking around a little square off the main street and sitting on a bench. I mostly just tried to stay out of sight from Baugh and Popp.

While walking across the main street, I heard Baugh and Popp exclaim something on the phone. The Steiner car was apparently moving again. Baugh used the car under my name to once again follow the SUV belonging to the Steiners. As I stood on the main road, I saw Baugh aggressively tailing a red car. Baugh instructed me to pull up a police scanner and when I did, I heard a



mention of someone being followed to the police department. I told Baugh and Popp, who backed off and told me to meet them in a parking lot. I was shaking with fear and rage as Baugh told me he saw the driver take a photo of their plates. I was furious that Baugh has taken it so far – I realized that if the Steiners were calling the police, then they clearly weren't "in on it" or "expecting" that kind of retaliation as Baugh had claimed.

Baugh saw my distress and told me I had nothing to worry about. He claimed that even if I did, they couldn't trace rental plates once the car is turned in. He had me return the rental car he was driving at the hotel and told me to book a flight home.

Later that night, we went to dinner. Baugh and Popp got in an argument about something that had happened the week prior. Baugh stormed out of the bar and I headed back to the hotel with Popp. As I got back to the hotel, Baugh texted me to meet him at a different bar. He complained about Popp and her attitude and told me to change my flight because he decided I shouldn't leave in the morning. I was crushed that I wasn't going home. I knew I needed to talk to my parents and ask for their help in figuring out what to do next. Baugh texted Stockwell and the other analysts instructing them to travel to Boston the next day.

As we were walking back to the hotel, Stockwell called Baugh and told him that Michelle was quitting. Apparently Michelle was planning to give her two-week notice, but decided to quit earlier to avoid needless spending on her travel. Baugh flew into a rage and told me that Michelle was now dead to us and that I was not to contact her. He told me that he would be sure to ruin her life. He had me join him in his hotel room as he tried to reach Popp.

Soon after Michelle quit, Eleanor texted Stockwell to say that she did not want to travel to Boston on short notice, and that she thought she should stay back at the office so someone was there while everyone else was gone. Baugh was incredibly drunk at this point and fired Eleanor via group chat. His rage continued for some time, now directed at me. He said if I left him too, there would be hell to pay. I dodged as he threw items at my head and yelled at me for f\*cking everything up. He finally let me leave to go to bed.

The next few days were relatively quiet. Baugh had Popp and me meet him at a bar late on the night of August 20. I did not eat dinner before hand and was quite inebriated.

I woke up the next morning to my hotel room phone ringing. I rushed to answer it, scared that it was Baugh. The man on the other end identified himself as a Natick detective and asked if I could speak with him. I panicked and told him that I had a phone call I needed to handle first, but might be able to meet him downstairs in half an hour. We hung up.

I tried to call Baugh several times and eventually ran to his hotel room. He was very clearly drunk. He told me not to panic and that he was handling everything. He told me to pack my suitcase and that we needed to leave the hotel. As we left the hotel, my phone rang with a Natick area code. I showed it to Baugh who took it out of my hand and answered. He informed the detective on the other end that he was my husband and that I did not want to speak with him. He hung up and told me to get a cab.



Baugh had me find another hotel to go to and rented a room. He made me order three Bloody Marys and repeatedly watched the Johnny Be Good clip as we waited for Popp to join us. He laughed at the apparent fear on my face. He was truly unhinged. He drained two of the drinks and the third went untouched. Popp finally joined us and Baugh left the hotel, announcing that he'd see us back in California.

I took a shower and sorted through my bag. As I did so, I witnessed Popp messing around on a Twitter account. She told me Baugh was having her pull attention away from me. It wasn't until later that I knew the full scope of what went in to these truly heinous and unforgivable messages. I went to the airport and headed home.

When I arrived back in San Jose, I received an email from Amir, an attorney on eBay's legal team. I forwarded it to Baugh, asking him how to handle it since he said he was working with people in eBay's legal department.

He told me to go ahead and take the call with Amir; that it was just a formality. He said to tell Amir the cover story about the cyber security conference and that Amir just needed to check this off his list.

I took the call with Amir and was shocked to learn that he was in contact with Natick police. Amir went on to claim that they had video evidence of me knocking on the Steiners' front door and revving a car engine in their driveway late at night. I knew this couldn't possibly be true, since I never did such things. I started to cry and told Amir that I wasn't comfortable with his aggressive questions and that I wanted to speak with my contracting agency. He told me that was fine.

Baugh came back from the east coast and told me that Amir was trying to blame everything that happened on me. He told me the Natick police department had contacted eBay and now people that were previously out of the loop were aware something was going on. Baugh explained that they needed someone to take the blame and they were trying to use me as a scapegoat and claim that I was just a contractor that went rogue. Baugh told me the next time I spoke with legal, Popp would be present to help guide me. He sent me home early.

The next morning, I had a meeting in the War room with Baugh, Popp, Gilbert, and Harville. Baugh coached us on what to say in our upcoming phone calls. He had us listen in on the calls legal had with Popp and Harville.

He told us that legal clearly wasn't taking this too seriously since they were doing the calls via phone rather than in person or via video chat. He had Popp sit in with me during my conference call and instruct me on what to say in response to Amir's questions.

When the calls were over, we received notice that eBay legal had hired outside counsel. Baugh told me that for my own safety, he would be suspending me with pay so that eBay had no right to speak with me. He assured me that he just needed to speak with someone higher up in legal and that all would be well. He told me that he forbade me from meeting with outside counsel.

Before I left, Baugh had me pull up an email on my laptop where I had submitted the receipts for the gift cards for reimbursement. He took the laptop from me and permanently deleted the email. He said it would lead to less confusion without it. He also said to delete my WhatsApp messages to clear my phone of confidential information that the legal team didn't have the right to see. I left my laptops in the office and went on leave. It was the last time I was ever at eBay. From what I've learned, my laptops were never seen again.

I had a planned family trip that I went on the following week. While gone, I learned Baugh and all others involved were suspended without pay. Baugh told me it was just a formality.

Later that week I went to Las Vegas to speak with PFC. I was under the impression that they hired an attorney to represent me when speaking with eBay. I quickly discovered the attorney was just trying to determine PFC's liability with the whole operation. Baugh told me to give the attorney the cover story as well. Baugh and Gilbert also instructed me to ask the payroll team to delete the email with the gift card receipts. I made the request, but didn't physically delete the email myself like they suggested. I wasn't comfortable doing so and didn't understand why they thought it was necessary.

The following week, Baugh, Harville, Popp, Gilbert, Stockwell, and Scott were all fired. Baugh had us over to his house to tell us that he was suing eBay over this. He went on and on about getting millions from them. I still had a job with PFC at the time and Baugh assured me that he spoke with the CEO at PFC to confirm that I'd continue working with them. He showed the group texts from the eBay CEO saying that he was sorry to see Baugh go and Baugh said his loyalty would pay off. I was fired from PFC the next day.

The following month I received a letter notifying me that an investigation into eBay and the people involved would be taking place. At the same time, my younger sister was dealing with a septic kidney infection and was suspected to have cancer. This was heavy on my mind as I navigated the following weeks.

Not long before my first meeting with the Assistant United States Attorneys handling the investigation into this matter, my sister was declared cancer free. I was relieved, but still did not have the time or mental capacity to process what had happened at eBay before my initial proffer session with the Government.

I was also still in contact with Baugh and Stockwell leading up to the proffer. Baugh continued to try to exert control over me. It worked because I was convinced he was the only person that could help me. He managed to isolate me further from family and friends by telling me I couldn't say anything about this to them or I'd risk getting them involved.

I remember I submitted my final expense report a few weeks after being fired. The expense report included receipts from my trip to Boston. Baugh was furious. He said I had just handed over evidence to PFC. At this point, I still wasn't understanding that what occurred was a serious crime. I didn't understand why Baugh was furious. I don't regret turning those receipts in.

My last contact with Baugh was when he referred me to an attorney. He also offered to send me money to help pay my legal fees. Growing wearier of him at this point, I declined. I did not want

him to have any further hold on me. I believe this was an attempt at a bribe and am very thankful I turned it down.

I went back to San Jose from there and continued my new job at Facebook. I loved it. I was treated with respect and never expected to work more than eight hours. My bosses gave reasonable timelines for tasks to be completed and emphasized work-life balance. I was never punished for mistakes or humiliated in front of my peers. No one threatened my livelihood or me. I was able to spend time with friends and family again.

I cried over the realization that this was how workplaces actually operated in the real world. I started to realize the depths of the mental abuse I was subjected to at eBay when I would bring up anecdotes about it at Facebook and was met with shock and concern from my peers.

Then the COVID lockdowns happened and we were working from home. I was informed in spring that the United States Attorney in Boston was moving forward with charges. I was inconsolable, but grateful that I wasn't physically at work when I found out.

In June, I woke up to a text from one of my best friends on the east coast. She said the story was all over the news there. I had already told her what was happening, so she wasn't surprised. But I had not told anyone at Facebook yet. I called my boss and told her what happened. They told me to take the day off as they investigated the story. Many of the news articles were particularly unflattering - I read some that made claims that I physically broke into the Steiners' home. I was fired from Facebook that day.

I also hadn't told my extended family about what was happening yet. Not sure how to do so, and unable to speak on the phone due to crying, I took to text to inform them. I said I was sorry they had to find out that way, but that I wanted them to hear from me before they saw it online.

The next few months are a blur of tears and very intense regret and self-hatred. I became more and more aware of the pain the team's actions put the Steiners through. I agonized over being involved in something that caused others to live in fear.

I pleaded guilty in October 2020 and have since lived a life in purgatory. Never knowing when I would have to travel to Boston, unable to find serious employment, and trying so hard to keep myself together to prevent my loved ones from worrying too much. I wished I were dead.

Nowadays, people ask me about plans for the future and I can't answer. I can't move past this time in my life. I can't imagine anything good happening for me ever again - I don't deserve it.

I was happy to help Ms. Scapicchio with her case for the Steiners when my attorney let me know she wanted to interview me. I did an interview with the New York Times to give insight into the toxic culture at eBay. We discussed the bizarre and threatening movie clips that Baugh would play to make points. I didn't realize how odd that was until the reporter told me as much.

It's so easy to look at this situation in hindsight or as an outside observer and to ask why I didn't leave. I've agonized over that as well. I've been attending therapy for this for over two years

now. In therapy, I do a process called “eye movement desensitization and reprocessing” (EMDR). The point of EMDR is to re-examine events that trigger PTSD and to alleviate some of the distress associated with them.

Through EMDR, I’ve been able to revisit much of the events above and recognize how scared and alone I felt in those moments. Again – I felt I had no one to turn to when I was at eBay. I believed everyone in the company was in on it and would tell Baugh – same with police. While I deeply regret my actions, I can see why 25-year-old me did what I did. I don’t excuse it, but I understand.

Maya Angelou famously wrote, “Do the best you can until you know better. Then, when you know better, do better.” I did what I could at the time with the only resources I thought I had available. My actions were deeply flawed, but I thought they were my only option. Now that I know better and am out from under Baugh’s thumb, I can see the massive support system I have in my family and friends. I know who I can trust to help me if anything terrible happens again.

To be honest, I felt a very deep relief and sense of calm on the day PFC fired me. I was almost gleeful knowing that I never had to step foot in eBay again. My joy was obviously almost entirely diminished by the reality of what had happened in the months prior. But for a moment there, I felt that spark of relief. And I was so sad that I hadn’t realized I could leave sooner and have avoided any involvement in eBay’s actions towards the Steiners.

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As I work on this letter, I’m reeling from the unexpected loss of a pet.

I’ve had a lot of loss in the past five years. My best friend’s dad and my favorite aunt both died in 2017. My cousin was killed in 2018. I lost a great-uncle in Germany to cancer in 2021 and stood by my grandma’s bedside during her final hours this past spring.

The unexpected death of my cat in February 2019 sent me into a deep spiral. I struggled with his loss for months; weakened by a deep grief that Baugh regrettably took advantage of.

Pet loss hits me the hardest because there’s no way to speak with them. You aren’t able to make sure they’re aware of your love like you are with humans. You can’t explain your actions.

And as I sit here with this familiar hollow feeling of grief in my soul, I realize that I’ve felt this way on some level since 2019. I’ve been grieving over how my actions impacted the Steiners for more than three years now. I haven’t been able to give them the apology they so rightly deserve. My inability to give them any sort of closure impacts me the same way as my grief over my loved ones.

I sleep more now than I did working at eBay, but I’ve never been more exhausted. I often wake up in a cold sweat, with nightmares about Baugh or prison or being back in Natick, with my back against a wall, terrified. My mom has woken several times to me yelling in my sleep.

I toss and turn so bad at night that I've had serious back pain for the past year. I can physically feel the weight of my grief and remorse as it drags my body down with it. Medicine and physical therapy have yet to ease the problem.

I'm losing my hair. My body breaks out in frequent rashes from stress. I'm carrying extra weight in my face and stomach from the high production of cortisol. I'm constantly covered in a thin layer of anxious sweat and I pick at various blemishes all over my body until they bleed as some form of self-punishment.

And my heart hurts. I can feel it sitting like a rock in my chest.

I'm scared every day of my life. Every black Porsche that drives by makes me jump because I'm afraid Baugh or Gilbert are inside. They both know where I live. Baugh was sure to remind me of that.

I physically run away from figures in the distance that resemble the men involved in this. I've left stores to get away from people that were triggering my fear.

And I know this must be similar to how the Steiners feel. I hate to presume anything about them now. It even feels wrong to use their name – like I don't have the privilege to type it.

But I torture myself every day by imagining how they must have felt in those weeks when they were getting bombarded by confusing and scary mail. How they must have feared any movement by their front door. Perhaps they jumped whenever the phone rang. They were probably exhausted.

I feel that now, on a lesser level. I know the names and faces of the things that scare me. I'm scared to check my email, calls and texts frighten me, and I stopped reading the local news. For the most part, I live in a carefully crafted bubble meant to shelter me from anything that could finally make me fall apart entirely.

But the Steiners didn't have that comfort. The things that were happening to them were occurring inside their bubble – their home. Mysterious boxes sent to their front door that frightened and confused them. Baugh, Popp, and myself walking past their street. The truly heinous messages that Popp and Baugh sent them. Gilbert apparently showing up at their front door.

Disgusting. The actions from the eBay team were disgusting. I am disgusted with myself for my involvement. I truly do not understand how my friends and family still love me.

I didn't dare reach out to the Steiners – even before I was officially barred from doing so. There was no way I was going to put my need to make myself feel better above their feelings. I cry now as I consider how a letter from me would make them feel. My name on the envelope striking fear into their hearts, reminding them of everything they've been through. It's how I would feel if I received a message from any of the other defendants in this case. It's how I feel when I get mail related to the case.

And that's what keeps me up at night. The knowledge that I was involved in something that made anyone else feel like I do. This is hell.

I wish I could tell the Steiners that I'm not an evil person and have them know that to be true. I fear Baugh, Popp, Harville, and Gilbert everywhere I go. I know the Steiners probably do as well. I'd imagine I'm also one of these shadow figures to them. The thought breaks my heart. I wish I could reassure them that there was no evil intent on my part.

I'm sure they know they did absolutely nothing to deserve what happened. But I want them to know that at least one person involved knew that as well. That I wasn't going along with the plan convinced that the Steiners were getting what they deserved. I was scared. I hate myself for being so weak.

I made stupid choices. I regret them every day. I will never be able forgive myself.

I'm sorry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Veronica Zea', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Veronica Zea